



PRESS RELEASE

AU Peace and Security Council and EU Political and Security Committee to hold their First Joint Retreat and 8th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting on 15-16 October 2015, in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, 12 October 2015 – Within the framework of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership in the area of peace and security, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the European Union Political and Security Committee (EUPSC) will hold their first Joint Retreat in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, on 15 October 2015, on the theme: *“Enhancing coordination between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Political and Security Committee of the European Union on Conflict Prevention and Mediation”*. The Joint Retreat will be followed by the 8th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting between both organs, on 16 October 2015, at the same venue.

The Joint Retreat is in implementation of an agreement reached by both Organs during their 7th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting, held in Brussels, on 15 May 2014, and consistent with Articles 3 and 17 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council, specifically, Article 17 which states that: *“The Peace and Security Council shall also cooperate and work closely with other relevant international organizations on issues of peace, security and stability in Africa.”*

During the above-referenced 7th Joint Annual Consultative Meeting, the AUPSC and EUPSC, among other things, agreed to enhance their joint working methods and to hold brainstorming sessions/retreats to discuss matters of common concern. The Joint Retreat, which translates that agreement into concrete action, is expected to contribute to a greater awareness of the challenges related to conflict prevention, mediation, and offer both Organs an opportunity to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned in Africa and Europe.

The Joint Retreat confirms and demonstrates the recognition by both Organs of the growing importance of their strategic partnership and the need to strengthen political dialogue and cooperate to ensure full and effective implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The EU continues to be one of the main strategic partners of the AU on a range of issues, providing support through several instruments, notably, the Africa Peace Facility (APF), through which the EU is supporting the operationalization and implementation of various components of APSA.

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The Joint Retreat will offer Members of both Organs an opportunity to exchange views on practical measures to enhance cooperation between the AUPSC and EUPSC on conflict prevention and mediation, as well as on capacity building and migration. During the 8th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting, Members of the AUPSC and EUPSC will exchange views on a range of peace and security challenges in Africa, including South Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Mali/Sahel.

The Joint Retreat and Annual Joint Consultative Meeting will be co-chaired by Ambassador Rachid Benlounes of Algeria, AUPSC Chairperson for October 2015, and Ambassador Walter Stevens of Belgium, Permanent Chair of the EUPSC. ***The co-chairs will brief the media on the outcomes of both the Joint Retreat and the 8th Annual Joint Consultative Meeting on Friday, 16 October 2015 at 15:00 Hours, at Kuriftu Hotel, Debre Zeit, Ethiopia. Representatives of the media are invited to cover the briefing.***

End

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